(b) to (d) The workers, who are covered under the provisions of ESI Act, 1948 including beedi workers are being provided medical care in ESI hospitals. There is no proposal to provide medical treatment to those beedi workers, who are not covered under the provisions of ESI Act from ESI hospitals.

(e) About 40 lakh beedi workers are issued identity cards and all these workers are provided medical care through 206 dispensaries and 4 hospitals set up exclusively for beedi workers in the country. In addition to this, these workers are also eligible for reimbursement of cost of treatment, for specific diseases, taken from other recognized hospitals. Information regarding number of beedi workers getting medical aid from ESIC hospitals is not available as ESIC does not keep industry-wise figures

Construction Workers Act

762. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the situation of women construction workers is worse today than ever before as globalization has brought with it the perils of mechanization and loss of jobs;

(b) whether Government are considering to review of labour displacing technologies and policies;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the construction Workers Act have left out some sections of construction workers; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) and (b) No Sir, it has been observed that the number of construction workers including women construction workers has increased considerably since 1991. As per census 1991, the total number of construction workers in the country were 55.43 lakhs. As per the estimates of National Sample Survey (NSS) (1999-2000) the number of construction workers including women workers were about 176 lakhs.

(c) and (d) Most of the skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled, manual workers in the areas of construction, alterations, repairs, maintenance etc. in relation to building, streets, roads, railways, airfields, tramways, irrigation etc. are

covered under the Building and Other Construction Workers (RECS) Act, 1996.

Functioning of EPFO

763. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have called a meeting to discuss the functioning of the EPFO (Employees Provident Fund Organisation);

(b) if so, the objectives of the proposed meeting to discuss functioning of the EPFO;

(c) whether it is a fact that trade unions have expressed their unhappiness at the lack of constructive activities from the EPFO;

(d) the details of the representations of diverse trade unions on the EPFO; and

(e) the steps proposed by Government to resolve all such disputes and criticism against the EPFO?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) and (b) The Parliamentary Consultative Committee attached to Ministry of Labour and Employment is scheduled to discuss the working of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation on 14th Dec, 2004.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, the All India Trade Union Congress have expressed their unhappiness about the working of the EPFO; and

(e) the CBT, EPF and the Government regularly monitor and review the performance of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation to ensure better service standards.

Unemployment in the country

764. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the unemployment of the educated in the country;